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E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/17/2027

TAGS: PTER PREL KTFN DA TU

SUBJECT: PKK-LINKED ROJ-TV DOMINATES TURKEY-DENMARK CT
TALKS, DENMARK REQUESTS "BETTER" EVIDENCE

Classified By: Political Counselor Janice Weiner. Reasons: 1.4 (b)(d).

¶1. (C) Summary. Denmark needs "better" evidence from the Turks to successfully prosecute PKK-linked ROJ-TV, Danish U/S Taksoe-Jensen told his Turkish counterparts during inaugural Turkey-Denmark CT consultations on December 12. Given the strict independence of Denmark's prosecutors, he suggested exploring ways to facilitate informal contacts between their respective prosecutorial offices. The two sides also discussed additional ways to formalize CT cooperation. End summary.

¶2. (C) As expected, ROJ-TV, the PKK-linked satellite television network operating out of Denmark, dominated inaugural Turkey-Denmark counterterrorism consultations in Ankara on December 12, Danish Embassy DCM Soren Jacobsen told Regional CT Coordinator on December 14. Ambassador Peter Taksoe-Jensen, MFA Undersecretary for Legal Affairs headed the Danish delegation which met for over four hours with Rafet Akgunay, Deputy Undersecretary for General and Multilateral Political Affairs, and for 35 minutes with Undersecretary Ertugrul Apakan. He also met with officials responsible for bilateral relations, academics and local NGO representatives, including those from Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch.

¶3. (C) Discussion of ROJ-TV operations was heated, Jacobsen related, with Turkey claiming it had provided ample evidence to Denmark for more than five years with no resulting action against the station. "It should be easy to close down," the Turks insisted. Taksoe-Jensen repeated Danish explanations that information provided to date was inadequate to support a court case and asked for more "good" evidence. While noting the strict independence of the Danish prosecutors' office, he suggested the two sides explore options for informally bringing Danish and Turkish prosecutors together to exchange views. Denmark, he also reminded, had pushed successfully to get the PKK onto the EU's list of terrorist organizations when it held the Presidency in 2002. He noted it would become more difficult for suspected terrorists to acquire visas after January 1, 2008, when the EU list and Schengen list are harmonized.

¶4. (C) Taksoe-Jansen explained to his interlocutors that Danish police are conducting their own investigation into possible criminal offenses by ROJ-TV and that MFA cannot and will not interfere. Separately, Danish broadcast authorities are looking into possible regulatory violations by ROJ. In the context of the ROJ-TV discussion, the Danes suggested Turkey expand domestic Kurdish-language broadcasting to reduce ROJ-TV's appeal. Deputy Undersecretary Akgunay improbably asserted that, in fact, few regular Kurds watch ROJ; PKK leaders watch it in search of "secret signals." (NOTE: Numerous GOT officials have admitted privately to us the need for Turkey to increase the level of Kurdish-language broadcasting.)

¶5. (C) The Turks asked Denmark to conclude a bilateral anti-terrorism agreement similar to the one it recently concluded with Iraq, Jacobsen reported. Denmark suggested a MOU to enhance counterterrorism cooperation. According to Jacobsen, the initial bilateral CT dialog achieved its modest goals of inaugurating a formal dialogue on counterterrorism and demonstrating to the Turks at a high level that Denmark is aware of the PKK problem and is taking action to address it. Both sides agreed to continue the high-level CT exchange in 2008.

¶6. (C) Comment. Absent stronger Turkish evidence on PKK links to ROJ-TV, meaningful Danish legal action against ROJ-TV will have to depend largely on evidence developed by the Danes. As part of an effort to strengthen Turkish evidence, Danish Embassy contacts expressed interest in receiving help to facilitate the proposed informal contacts between Turkish and Danish prosecutors. We will work with our Resident Legal Advisor, who has considerable experience in this area, to explore possible avenues of assistance.

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